

TOWN OF WILTON BUDGET COMMITTEE

**Location: Wilton Town Hall: Court Room
7:00 P.M.**

FINAL MEETING MINUTES January 7, 2016

Members Present: Cary Hughes, Chairman; Betsy Castro; Harry Dailey; Joyce Fisk; Donna Pucciarello; Kermit Williams, Selectmen Rep.(in place of Rick Swanson; and Dawn Tuomala, Secretary

- 1. Chairman Hughes called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.**
- 2. Review and Approval of Minutes**

- a. December 15, 2015**

Page 3 Line 7 remove "still loses money" and replace with "is budgeted to lose money".

Motion was made by Mr. Dailey to accept the minutes of December 15, 2015 as amended; seconded by Ms. Fisk; 3 in favor; 3 abstentions (Ms. Castro, Ms. Pucciarello and Mr. Williams); motion passes.

- b. December 3, 2015**

Mr. Hughes stated that it is not the job of the budget committee to evaluate the entities in Town and felt that on page 5 last paragraph of the Library section should be taken out completely and only the last sentence remains.

Motion was made by Mr. Dailey to remove the 2 sentences; seconded by Ms. Fisk: 4 in favor; 2 abstained (Ms. Pucciarello and Mr. Williams); motion passes.

- 3. Town Administrator Sub-Committee – Kermit Williams, Chair**

The intent is to write a warrant article for the position of a Town Administrator. They would start using the salary scale rather than assign a certain amount. If it passes at Town Meeting than it will take a couple of more months to find the right person, hire them and have them start; probably about 6 months into the year. They are not required to create the position by a warrant article but they felt that asking the people what they felt is the right thing to do.

Chairman Hughes stated that the warrant article requires a budget amount associated with it. The warrant should have the prorated amount of money that it will take to hire that person for the 6 months of the year including pay and all benefits. Mr. Williams stated that they were looking at a pay grade between 13 and 14 depending upon experience and that would be in the \$65,000 to \$84,200 range.

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Mr. Williams stated that they feel that hiring the right person can make the budget and other processes in Town proceed more smoothly. All of the data can be prepared, checked; projects can be followed better to ensure things flow smoother.

4. Changes in Proposed Budgets

The 2015 actual expenses have been brought up to the end of the year for most of the Departments however the Ambulance is the one that still has the October figures. The books are not closed and there will still be changes throughout the next couple of weeks. All of the Departments were reviewed one by one for any changes:

The Building Inspector had filing cabinets given to him so the new equipment line has been reduced to \$1,000. Mr. Williams stated that the Building Inspector will be going in for surgery so they will be hiring someone to take his place. He asked how that should be put into the budget. If he/she is hired as an employee than it can come out of the same line however if they are hired as a contractor than there will have to be a new contractor line created. This will have to be discussed and decided by the Selectmen.

Mr. Elliott stated that the Parks and Recreation has had an increase of \$5,500 to account for the installation of a new electrical panel and line at Carnival Hill. This was an estimate that he received for the work but this has not been reviewed by the Selectmen at this point. The Highway stormwater line has been reduced to \$25,000.

Chief Hautanen has completed the reviews of his officers and has used the pay raise matrix to adjust their pay scales. They have hired a new assistant that used to work for the Department years ago therefore they don't have to train her. The Administrative Assistant line has been increased since they have been giving her more money than what was originally allocated; the Selectmen have approved this increase. The gas line has been decreased since they haven't spent as much money due to the lower cost of gas. There could still be another increase when the Selectmen perform his review. Regarding a question about the increase in the 2015 cruiser line, Chief Hautanen stated that this line was split between the new cruiser and the old one which needed more work prior to the new one coming in.

The Sewer Department budget has duplicate numbers placed in the budget inflating the postage and delivery line in particular to \$20,115. All of the numbers will be reviewed and adjusted so that the bottom line will be accurately reflected. They are going to encumber \$50,000 with a contract to continue with the Maple Street project started a few years ago. Mr. Carter stated that they are still after the Town of Milford to give them the final numbers.

The Town Hall administration budget has an increase of contract Services to \$20,000 due to the Economic Development potential contract and an increase in the web site payment. The Special project line has been moved to the labor lines. The Town Clerks Budget hasn't been updated yet but it will be before the next review. The pay has gone up to adequately reflect the hours actually worked. The Benefits package hasn't been updated at this point.

a. Library Review

Pat Fickett, Director and Molly Shanklin, Treasurer from the Library came in to discuss their changes. Mr. Dailey helped them with their wage and salaries by looking at 22 other Towns and then looking at Towns that are a match to our Town and size. The pay grade for the Director was recommended and reduced to a Grade 9 with a proposed salary drop of \$1.00/hour and the Children's Librarian pay grad was recommended and

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reduced from a Grade 7 to a Grade 6 or a drop of \$5.50/hour. The Town of Wilton is within the top 10% in the State for municipalities supporting the library. Mr. Williams stated that they will now be able to phase in the new salaries in one year since there will be a significant reduction impacting the bottom line.

There was discussion about the Library drainage payments. There will be an additional \$10,000 in landscaping fees that haven't been included anywhere in the budget yet. After much discussion it was decided to add \$5,000 to the library budget and they will fund raise to get the rest of the money. This will eliminate the need for a warrant article.

b. Main Street Review

Alison Meltzer presented a revised budget for Main Street. There was an \$11,000 surplus at the end of last year and they are going to use that to cover the anticipated expenses this year. They are hoping to get another \$10,000 from the Charitable Gaming but there is always a chance they will do less. They are hopeful that someone will come forward and sponsor the fireworks again this year. They are still planning to use \$5,000 of the \$10,000 given from the Town to help people starting a new business in town. The remaining \$5,000 will be used for the promotion of their planned seasonal events designed to draw people into town and highlight the downtown merchants. Mr. Dailey still has concerns that the Summer Festival appearing to be losing money on the budget. The income line can be adjusted to reflect a break even amount for the Festival.

c. Goss Park Review

Lisa Davidson provided a revised budget for Goss Park with an increased repair of the pier wall and they will have a lot of donated materials. The insurance did go up \$600 for this year since the old insurance company won't cover them anymore. They have also had to increase their payroll so that they won't lose any more people. They have lost 3 again this year to other towns that pay more. The bottom line increase to Wilton is \$8,600 for a total of \$29,962. After the pier wall is repaired this year the budget should go down by \$2,000.

5. Ambulance and Recycling Budget Reviews

Reviews were done on the Ambulance and Recycling Center budgets in preparation of the participating Town meeting next week. The Ambulance 2015 actual expenses are still being calculated. Chief Zirpolo stated that Comstar revenues have been increased to \$156,000.

Mr. Elliott stated that the recycling commodities have gone through the floor and aren't anticipated on increasing any time soon. This year he was able to get an estimated \$95,000 in but all of the checks haven't come in yet. The anticipated income for next year has been decreased to \$75,000 from \$100,000 this year and this might be an optimistic figure. As a result, the individual town payments will be substantially increased.

6. CIP Review & Changes

There is now a CIP subcommittee of the Planning Board; members are Kermit Williams, Joe Torre and Dawn Tuomala. The concentration this year has been to add infrastructure into the CIP and not just individual items.

Mr. Williams stated that there are many projects now listed under the Town Hall. The Selectmen have been working on prioritizing them. The insulation project has come to a halt when they found out there was a too narrow a space under the flooring system of the town hall to add the required insulation. This year they would like to upgrade the heating

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system with a pellet furnace system. The cost will be about \$149,000; there is \$23,500 in the capital reserve and they will need another \$119,000 to put the system in. There was discussion about having a return on investment analysis done prior to putting in this system to make sure that it will be the most efficient system for the Town Hall.

They are also looking at having a possible design done to rip out the old police station area and redesigning that entire end of the building to make it more usable, better insulated and bringing the electrical up to date.

Many items have been added to the list along with the year of replacement. It has also been recommended to replace the garage at Laurel Hill that houses most of the equipment. Mr. Elliott stated that the back corner is sagging about 6 inches.

The Fire Department is looking for many trucks in the coming years. The Highway Department is looking for a new backhoe with the current backhoe going to the Recycling Center and trading in the Recycling Backhoe. Next year a new dump truck will be needed to replace the Mack 10 Wheeler, a loader the following year and a new Freightliner F-80 the following year. A new highway garage building replacement has also been added to the list. The Selectmen are looking to replace that in about 10 years. If money can be put aside each year then maybe a bond won't be needed.

The State has approved the replacement of the King Brook Road bridge project this year which means the Town needs to come up with \$103,000 to cover the engineering and the installation of the bridge. In 2 years the Stage Coach Road Bridge will need to be replaced at a cost to the Town of \$56,000.

There was discussion about the Library request of \$22,000 each year for 10 years. This amount will pay for the entire anticipated cost of replacing the slate roof. Ms. Shanklin and Mr. Browne stated that they plan on applying for LCHIP funds but the Library will need to have 2/3 the amount from the Town in the bank before they can apply. There is a possibility of applying for a grant of \$75,000. They are also planning on doing fund raising as the time gets closer. They will consider not making the request for \$22,000 for this year if there are too many other expenses this year.

The police SUV is scheduled to be replaced this year. Work on establishing the infrastructure needs of the Recycling Center are now being established. At this point there are no exact estimates. The WLC School District CIP amounts have also been added to the town CIP form to establish a total picture for the Town.

7. Other Business – None at this time.

8. Adjournment

The next meeting will be a meeting with all of the participating Towns for recycling and ambulance on January 14, 2016 at 7:00 at the Wilton Town Hall.

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting by Ms. Castro and seconded by Mr. Dailey; all in favor. The Budget Committee was adjourned at 9:07 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Dawn Tuomala, Secretary